

ple I met with tonight were four local government leaders from the Northeast, three State legislative leaders from the South and the West, and some Hispanic and African-American women who are active in political organizations all over the country. And I just go around the table and let them talk.

About the 10th person to talk was this very tall, stately, impressive African-American woman from San Francisco. She looked at me—this is self-serving, but I am going to tell you anyway—this woman looked at me and said, “Before we get down to what I came to talk about, let’s get first things first.” She said, “My daddy is 75 years old, and he lives in St. Louis, but he was born and grew up in Hope, Arkansas”—the same little town in Arkansas I was born in—“and he went to Yeager High School,” which was the all-black high school at the time when the schools were segregated. “And he told me that your grandfather, at his little store, was one of only four white people in town that would really do business with black folks.” She said, “Is that true?”

I said, “Yes, ma’am, it’s true. And I can still remember when I was 5 years old, sitting on that wooden store counter next to a big jar of Jackson’s cookies that were this big and sold for a penny apiece, listening to my granddaddy tell me that those people who came into his store were good people, and they worked hard, and they deserved a better deal in life.”

Remarks to the Saxophone Club May 8, 1996

The President. Thank you very much. I tell you, there’s not much left for me to say. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Matt and all the leaders of the Saxophone Club, and all of you who have been with us all these years. It has always been a joy for me to come to the Saxophone Club and see all of your faces filled with hope and energy. And even when we have to be late coming here and it’s midnight, you’re still raring to go, and that’ll take us to victory and that’s good.

Now, let me tell you folks, that’s what makes this country great. Our political system is not great because it’s a political system. It is not even great because it works economically. It’s great because it gives us all a chance to live out our dreams and because in every generation we keep trying to meet the challenges and protect our values and live up to what we say we believe in. That is really what this is all about.

And we cannot go into the global economy of the 21st century by walking away from our common responsibilities and saying that we don’t have a common responsibility to help everybody’s kids live up to the fullest of their dreams. You think about it, talk about it, stand up for it, work for it. Don’t be overconfident, and we will prevail.

Thank you, and God bless you, and good night.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:32 p.m. at the Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Donald L. Fowler, national chairman, Senator Christopher J. Dodd, general chairman, and Marvin Rosen, national finance chairman, Democratic National Committee; Terence McAuliffe, finance chairman, Clinton/Gore ’96; Dan Dutko and Beth Dozoretz, dinner cochair; musician Stevie Wonder; comedian Robin Williams; Alma Brown, widow of former Secretary of Commerce Ronald H. Brown; and Reform Party Presidential candidate Ross Perot.

I want to say to you how proud I am to be on this stage with Tipper Gore, and all that she’s done, how profoundly grateful I am in ways, as I said earlier tonight, that will never be fully known until I write my memoirs, for the contributions that Al Gore has made to the United States of America.

And I want to say that you couldn’t have gladdened my heart any more with anything than you did when you gave such an intense and spontaneous and genuine cheer to the First Lady. [*Applause*] Thank you. I want you to know what I whispered to her when you were doing

that the first time—[laughter]—I’ve had occasion to tell her on several occasions the last couple of years, as Senator whatever his name is, with the hyphenated name, got ginned up—I mean, with the apostrophe in his name—[laughter].

She’s taken a lot of grief just because she happened to be here and she was my spouse. And they didn’t want to deal with the issues so they tried to go after her personally, and the rest of us, and because she had the temerity to say it seemed to her that every working family in the country ought to be able to give health care to their children, frankly, and because there are still some folks in this country who just don’t think women ought to speak up and be heard and be seen and live their lives and do what they’re supposed to do.

But you know, where I grew up we had a saying when things were really tough and unfair. Our saying was, “It’s a long road that doesn’t turn,” and your cheer says this road has turned, and we’re going to send them a message about that. This road has turned.

Now, let me just say two points I want to make very briefly. The first is, I don’t care what the polls say; this is going to be a hard, tough, close election.

Audience member. You’re going to win it!

The President. That’s right. We are if you don’t change the feelings, the intensity, and the commitment you have tonight any time in the next 6 months. This election is 6 months from today—not today, not tomorrow, 6 months from today. And you have to bear down. That’s the first point I want to make. You have got to bear down. Don’t let up. Reach other people. Keep talking about it. Talk about what’s at stake.

The second point I want to make to you is that this is not just another election. This election will take this country into the 21st century. This is not an election like 1992, where the issue was change versus the status quo. There are two very different but very dynamic visions here. Both approaches would represent a dramatic departure from America’s past—two visions of change.

I believe that those of you who are in this audience who are younger, who represent the bulk of the Saxophone Club and the future of this country, will have the most exciting lives of any generation of Americans ever, in terms of not only economic opportunities but opportunities for genuine personal fulfillment. If we

guarantee that opportunity to everybody without regard to their race, their gender, their station in life, if we decide that our diversity is a plus to be nurtured, that we should come together, instead of being used to divide us, and if we maintain our willingness to stay involved in the world as the world’s strongest force for peace and freedom and prosperity and security—if we will do those three things I believe that your future will be the brightest future any generation of Americans ever had and that you will have the opportunity to bring peace and integrity to people in ways that have never been done before.

But it depends on which road we decide to walk into the 21st century. And there is a genuine—the Vice President and I spent 50 hours in those budget negotiations with the Republican congressional leaders and the Democratic leaders. And I can say this in all respect—you know, they will say mean things about me between now and the election. Let me tell you something, the mean things are not what this election is about. It’s about two honestly different views. I spent 50 hours with them. They honestly look at the world differently than we do. [Laughter] I say that—no, no—with all respect. Their view—let me give you—the most charitable view is—their view is, “Hey, man, this is an exciting world. I mean, there’s computers and new businesses and the world is unfolding, and it’s not bureaucracy driven and it’s not top down and heavy laden like it used to be. So what we need to do is give everybody a whole bunch of choices and demolish the Government, and everything will be great.”

And that’s what they really believe, that anything public—after national defense, national security, and paving roads—is an oppression of personal liberty. [Laughter] Now, what I believe is that we don’t need the same old big Government we used to have. Al Gore has changed it. They cursed it. He changed it. We reduced the size of the Government. We did it.

But I believe to say that you can leave this country and every person in this country and the spirit of community in this country and the quality of our environment and the quality of educational opportunity and the safety of our streets to the tender mercies of the global economy unattended by a common effort by Americans to help all of us make the most of our own lives is dead wrong. That’s what I believe.

I'll never forget when I was in college and I first read the great French writer Anatole France, who said that in the France about which he wrote, "The rich and poor are equally free to sleep under the bridge at night." Or today you might say everybody is free to go in and buy a Mercedes. What does that mean? Does that mean we should resent the rich? No, we want more people to make money. What it means is that we should work together to give everybody the chance to make the most of their own lives in their work life, as citizens, in their families, in their communities.

That means a good economy, safe streets, a clean environment, good education. It means bringing people together instead of driving them apart. It means America still being willing to stand up for peace and freedom around the world. That's what that means. That's what that means.

And I'm telling you, you don't have to guess—but remember, we're going through a time of huge, sweeping, breathtaking change in the way we work, in the way we live. And everybody is out there struggling to try to figure out what's

going on and trying to get a hook on it. And a lot of people are vulnerable to simple wrong answers.

So I say to you, this is a serious thing. We're having a great time tonight. You've made me happier than you'll ever know. I love to come to these things. I love your spirit. I love your enthusiasm. I love your optimism. I love your belief in yourselves and your country. But I'm telling you, this is going to be a hard, tough, close election, because it is a fight for the future. And it is not like 1992. Two dynamic visions, two very different. We're going to get on one road and walk right into the 21st century. You can make sure it's the right road, but you need to keep what you have tonight every day from now until November—every day—to everyone you can speak with.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at midnight in the Regency Ballroom at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Saxophone Club chair Matt Fruman. These remarks were released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 9.

Remarks Welcoming President Konstandinos Stephanopoulos of Greece *May 9, 1996*

President Stephanopoulos, members of the Greek delegation, distinguished guests. On behalf of the American people, I am delighted to welcome President Stephanopoulos to the White House. It is an honor to return the warm hospitality the people of Greece showed the First Lady when she visited their wonderful country in March.

Two thousand five hundred years ago, the birth of democracy in Greece lit the landscape of Western civilization. Greek architecture, poetry, philosophy, and law set new standards for human achievement and new measures for human progress. Today, we Americans share with Greece the glory of that ancient legacy. We join with Greece, our ally and our friend, in raising democracy's flag around the world. For a half century, from World War II to the Persian Gulf, our nations have stood together in defense of shared ideals. Now we are working to build a bright future of security, prosperity,

and peace. The strengthening of our relations in recent years has paved the way to closer cooperation to the benefit of our own people and all the world. In Bosnia, our soldiers serve side by side to help the peace take hold. Throughout the Balkans, from Albania to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, America looks to Greece to be a force of peace and stability.

And we must stand as one against the deadly scourge of terrorism. May I express, once more, on behalf of all Americans our deep condolences to the families and friends of the 17 Greek citizens who were murdered in Cairo last month.

The partnership between America and Greece is reinforced by the bonds of family. All across our country, Americans of Greek descent have added to the richness and the warmth of America's quilt. The values they have brought here to their adopted home—love of family, faith, and community, taking responsibility, working